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THE "ARTISAN POET" OF WALES

SIR:

You may remember my article in your journal, *An Artisan Poet*, in February last. I have just heard from Mr. Menai Williams to the effect that a new edition of his book of poetry, *Through the Upward Shaft*, is being published by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, London, England; also, that another volume by the same author will probably be published in the autumn.

I write this to you because I have received so many inquiries, both directly and through you, as to the publishers and sellers of *Through the Upward Shaft*. I think it would benefit lovers of literature generally if you could insert a note—or even this letter—to this effect in your valuable and influential REVIEW.

DEWI J. WILLIAMS.

Bulawayo, South Africa.

IN DEFENSE OF THE GARBAGE CAN

SIR:

I do not wish the title to be taken in too literal a sense, since it is written in the form of a rebuttal to the argument put forth in THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW by Elizabeth Robins Pennell. While her article started as a condemnation upon the lowly yet altogether too highly visible garbage can she later metamorphized this into the symbol of a national artistic inertia and slovenliness. I am not one of those individuals she refers to "who wears his patriotism upon his sleeve", nor do I consider it a crime to criticize one's own country; providing the criticism is just in its relation to the country as a whole. But her criticism and the examples she sets forth only apply in a sense to a remote part of a heterogeneous mass.

She takes New York as a model for her picture to represent the national shortcomings and with a broad, full brush, sweeps on the pigments in heavy masses obscuring the higher lights and subtiles. She regrets that Americans are so slovenly and that Art is lacking in the mad effort to obtain monetary independence and power, and then goes on to say that "American (art) students are almost as countless as the sands on the shore, and scholarships almost many enough to go the rounds". Surely this would seem an incongruity. While thousands may aspire to painting, sculpture, literature and music, it is only a very small minority who will ever be recognized. For the fruits of genius are not given to every man, and it is only the works of genius which withstand the erosion of the ages.

The "stately old towns of France or Spain or Italy" are doubtless more quaint and picturesque than towns in America—but it is mostly due to their backgrounds and traditions that they appeal to our romantic spirit. In point of cleanliness and sanitation they do not compare with New World methods.

The final and transcendent contradiction is her statement that we should

check the flood of European immigration which threatens our Democracy,—should stop these French, Spanish and Italians whose national habits she so faithfully upholds.

Garbage cans will no doubt continue to be of use in this country and will not materially affect cultural opportunities, all criticism to the contrary notwithstanding.

ALLEN WEST SHAW.

Riverside, Conn.

JOSEPH ANDREW GALAHAD

(Died April 13, 1922)

SIR:

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW will, I believe, have increasing pride in having published poems by Joseph Andrew Galahad, especially *The Knife* in the issue for May, 1920, which brought the author a cordial letter from John Masefield. Joe Galahad won many devoted friends in his short literary career; indeed it was impossible for anyone to come into his radius without feeling the peculiar elevation and fervor of his spirit. I have noted how the mere mention of his name changed the entire atmosphere of a group of people. All who have come into more intimate touch with him are proud to have been called his friends, as an Elizabethan might have been proud of his acquaintance with Sidney.

I have been of those who thought that poetry should be judged solely in itself, apart from the circumstances of its creation or the character of the poet. Now I am not so sure. Certainly the knowledge of Joe's life has given his work a far deeper meaning to me than it could have had otherwise. To know that a young man on his death-bed in almost continuous pain for three years could affirm his love of life, his belief in friendship, and his trust in the divine dispensation, with such glowing imagination, has been a different experience from reading a poem in the *Oxford Book*. And yet even before I knew anything of his suffering I inferred the intensity and nobility of Joe Galahad's nature in a poem, not of his best, which came to me in the ordinary routine of editing *Contemporary Verse*. For the man wrote as he lived, out of the special conviction of his soul.

Let us finally turn to the concluding lines of *Argosy*, where the spirit escapes from its fleshly prison of pain:

So I leaned and opened the window—
And left my body there:
The poor old tattered clay house,
With the cotton wool in its hair.
No more the four walls hold me,
And compass me about:
The sea gulls hear
And answer
The psalm of joy
That is my shout.